

**“The New New Thing”**

**Matthew 9v14-17**

**Scripture Ref: Is 29:13; Jer 31:31-34; Matt 26:27-28; Heb 8:7-13;  
Matt 5:17-19; Eph 2:19-22; Heb 9:15**

- 1. In just a few days, we'll be bringing in a new year – 2009!**
  - a. Hard to believe it is the end of the year – it seemed to fly by!**
  - b. Time for our “new year’s resolutions!” Lose a few pounds, exercise a little more,**
  - c. Maybe for the Christian we want to pray more, read our bibles more, good time to start the “One Year Bible”**
  - d. Now, I know that there is nothing “biblical” about a new year, or a new year’s resolution – But God is into NEW things!**
  - e. And as we approach this new year, I believe that there are some things that God wants to do in our lives, our families, and in our church.**
  - f. God wants to CHANGE us! But, change can be hard, especially for those of the faith!**

**What’s Wrong with You Guys?**

14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, *“Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?”*

- 2. This is not the religious rulers trying to confront Jesus about fasting**
  - a. These are disciples of John, people who are seeking God, asking a reasonable question....**
  - b. *“Jesus, we’ve been brought up being taught that fasting is a proper and spiritual thing to do, and we have always done it. John the Baptist did it. But we notice that your disciples don’t do it, and we’re wondering why.”***
- 3. It’s the same kind of question that gets asked in churches today, at our church.**
  - a. People have asked us about things that perhaps a church they attended held as a tradition**
  - b. Christmas Eve services, Advent candles, having a choir instead of a worship band, special music...**
  - c. All sorts of things some churches do, and some churches don’t do.**
  - d. These are things that we would call “traditions.”**

### **Tradition**

4. A tradition is custom or practice that has been handed down from one generation to another.
  - a. They are often useful, time honored, things that help us to remember who we are.
  - b. They can be very useful in the context of worship of the Lord.
  - c. However, that being said, we must be careful that we do not allow our traditions to be the foundation of our worship.
5. and as Jesus gives a response, He reveals that there is another, more important question:
  - a. The questions is not really “What’s wrong with you and your disciples”
  - b. But “what’s wrong with us?”

15 And Jesus said to them, *"Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.*

6. Jesus makes this comment based on the understanding of why people fasted in that culture
  - a. Remember we talked about fasting back in Matt 6:16-18, and there were several reasons that people fasted
    - i. During mourning and sadness,
    - ii. To seek direction
    - iii. To seek protection
    - iv. To seek The Lord!
  - b. And Jesus is saying: *“All of the reasons that you might fast involve seeking of ME – but right now I AM HERE WITH YOU! So, why would you fast now?”*
7. There will come a day when fasting is appropriate for Jesus’ followers.
  - a. But now, when Jesus is among them, is not that day!
8. Then Jesus make another, rather curious statement:

*16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. 17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."*

9. So, what is with all the talk about patches and skins? It’s a metaphor...

- a. In Jesus day, new wine would be placed into a wineskin, and sometimes remaining fermentation would cause the container to expand.
  - b. New wineskins, being made out of animal skin, were flexible and would expand.
  - c. An older wineskin would be dry and less flexible, and if new wine were to be put into it, the skin wouldn't expand, and the whole thing would burst. Big mess.
10. But what does that have to do with the original question about Jesus disciples not fasting?

**Point #1: Following Traditions instead of Jesus**

11. I believe it goes to the Christians have an inclination to take something like a relationship with God, and turn it into a tradition.

- a. We may not want to admit it, but we have the tendency to start with a dynamic relationship, then over time move towards “going through the motions”
- b. A new Christian is all excited, on fire for God, praying all the time and sharing their faith
- c. But over time they fall into a rut of tradition

12. It might look like this:

- a. They go to church, they give, they even serve... they are doing all the “right things.”
- b. They don't do the “bad things” they used to do.
- c. And at some point it becomes a “way of life” rather than a relationship.
- d. And it can become just like the Pharisees: They went through all of the motions, did all the proper temple rituals, avoided all of the obvious sins.
  - i. But their heart was far from God.

**Isa 29:13**

*"These people come near to me with their mouth  
and honor me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me.*

*Their worship of me*

*is made up only of rules taught by men.*

**(Jesus quoted this scripture to them in Matt 15)**

13. And Jesus disciples, they were more concerned with spending time with Jesus than they were with doing the “rituals” of Judaism.

- a. And Jesus was validating – “it is the important thing”

## **Point #2 – The New Covenant**

**14. Jesus had come not to "patch up" the old institutions of Judaism, but to institute a new covenant altogether.**

**(turn to) Jer 31:31-34**

*"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah -- 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

**Matt 26:27-28**

*27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."*

**Heb 8:7-13**

*For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah -- 9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."*

**13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.**

**15. Jesus' reference to the wineskins is His announcement that the present institutions of Judaism could not, and would not, contain His new wine.**

- a. He would form a new institution, the New Testament church, which would bring Jew and Gentile together into a completely new body...
- b. Jesus had come to do a NEW THING!

### ***The New New Thing***

- 16. And He is still doing “new things” “New” new things!
  - a. The Kingdom truth of the “New wineskins”
  - b. What is old and stagnant often cannot be renewed.
  - c. In other words, God may have worked in a specific way at one point in time – using certain people and methods that were completely relevant and useful in that current season and setting.
  - d. And yet later in time, those methods are not as relevant, and so God raises up different people and different methods to continue His work.
- 17. That does not mean that the people or methods of the earlier work were not good and useful.
  - a. Or that the new people and methods are better...
  - b. It means that both were anointed by God and useful in that season.
- 18. I think of past great moves of God, led by men such as Peter Cartwright, Asahel Nettleton, Lyman Beecher, James Caughey, and Jacob Knapp. (who are they??)
  - a. Men who we have never heard of – yet they led multitudes to Christ
  - b. Men like Charles G. Finney and Dwight L. Moody – radicals in their day, the established religious leaders didn’t like their methods, yet great revivals came through them.
  - c. Followed by Billy Graham – after one of his early meetings in Los Angeles, a fellow evangelist accused Graham of setting religion back 100 years.
    - i. Graham replied, *“I did indeed want to set religion back, not just 100 years but 1,900 years, to the Book of Acts, when first century followers of Christ were accused of turning the Roman Empire upside down”*
  - d. Billy was followed by Greg Laurie, CC pastor from Riverside, who used different music and media than Billy.
- 19. The fundamentals never change – only the methods

### ***Matt 5:17-19***

*“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven*

*and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

- a. For us that means that we'll always preach the gospel, we'll always teach the word of God,**
- b. We'll always hold fast to the foundation that was laid by the apostles and by Jesus Christ**

***Eph 2:19-22***

*...(we are) fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

**20. So we need to be very careful to not look at the things God did in the past, and think “that is the way God wants to work now.”**

**21. I believe God is always opening up “new wine”, moves of His Spirit that are anointed for His use in the current season.**

- a. And this “new wine” may be very different than the old wine we are used to – and we must be ready to move into that new work that God is doing!**

**22. Summation? “Don’t get stuck in the ‘tradition rut!’”**

- a. I believe that God has new things He wants to do – right here in our church.**
- b. New ways that He will open up doors for us to minister the Love of God to people.**

***Heb 9:15***

*15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

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